



U.S. Vessel Response Plans for Non-Tank Vessels (NTVRP) Interim Guidance

REF: [*Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circular \(NVIC\) 01-05*](#)

OVERVIEW: The U.S. Coast Guard is issuing interim guidance for the development and review of oil spill response plans for non-tank vessels. For this purpose, a non-tank vessel is a self-propelled vessel of 400 gross tons or greater, other than a tank vessel, that carries oil of any kind as fuel for main propulsion and that is either a vessel of the United States or a foreign vessel that operates on the navigable waters of the United States (internal waters and the 3-nm wide territorial sea).

NOTE: Gross Tonnage for determination of applicability is measured in accordance with the International Tonnage Convention (ITC). The Coast Guard realizes that many tug/tow vessels have only been admeasured to the Gross Registered Tonnage (U.S.) Standard. Guidance is forthcoming that addresses how this conflict will be addressed.

REQUIREMENTS: In accordance with the [Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2004 \(Pub.L. 108-293\)](#), a non-tank vessel of greater than or equal to 400 gross tons (ITC) must submit to the U.S. Coast Guard for approval a vessel response plan that is consistent with requirements of the National Contingency Plan and applicable Area Contingency Plans. The NTVRP must: (a) identify the qualified individual (QI) with the company's authority commit resources to the response and establish immediate communications with appropriate federal officials and response personnel as the company's representative; (b) identify and ensure by contract or other approved means the availability of private personnel and equipment necessary to remove to the maximum extent practicable a worse case discharge; (c) describe the training, equipment testing, periodic unannounced drills, and response actions by crewmembers; (d) be updated periodically; and (e) be resubmitted for approval of each significant change.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: The non-tank vessel response plan must be submitted to the Coast Guard not later than August 8, 2005.

EXCEPTIONS: Vessels of the United States that do not operate in the U.S. navigable waters or EEZ are not required to identify and have available response resources to respond to spills.

INTERIM NTVRP APPROVALS: The Coast Guard may issue a two-year authorization letter allowing the non-tank vessel to operate without an approved response plan if the plan submitted meets the above detailed requirements and is accompanied by a certification by the owner or operator that the availability of response personnel and resources has been ensured by contract or other approved means. Short-term interim authorization letters will be issued where there is insufficient time to verify the above requirements. Owners/operators are strongly encouraged to submit their NTVRPs no later than July 9, 2005, since the review process for each plan may take at least one month for initial review.

The plans should be submitted to:

[Commandant \(G-MOR-2\)](#)
U.S. Coast Guard, Room 2100
2100 Second Street, SW
Washington, DC 20593-0001
Attn: VRP Programs

FORMAT DESCRIPTION: The NTVRP will closely resemble those required for tank vessels. There are some differences, though. For a small vessel, the plan must address response to the vessel's average most probable discharge and salvage resources. For a vessel with a fuel capacity of 250 barrels or more, the plan must also address response to the vessel's maximum probable discharge and salvage and lightering resources. For a vessel with a fuel capacity of 2,500 barrels or more, the plan must address response up to the Tier I worst-case discharge volume to the maximum extent practicable and salvage, firefighting, and lightering. Vessels carrying very heavy fuel oil (group V petroleum oil) as fuel will have additional planning requirements.

ASSOCIATED COSTS OF COMPLIANCE: Expenses related to this new requirement are not addressed in the guidance, but may be relatively substantial - particularly for small operators with minimal infrastructure. Arrangements will have to be



made for the 24-hour availability of an individual or several individuals to serve as QI. Response contractors—Oil Spill Response Organizations or OSROs—will have to be retained. Training and drills will have to be developed and implemented.

Owners and operators should prepare and submit oil spill response plans consistent with the guidance contained in [Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circular \(NVIC\) 01-05](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/nvic/NVIC_01-05.doc.pdf) http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/nvic/NVIC_01-05.doc.pdf.

Points of Contact: New York Office — LTJG Hoon Park at (718) 354- 4280 or LCDR Paul Arnett at (718) 354-4289; Regulatory Project Coordinator — Mr. Scott Kuhanek at (202) 267-0240 or Tkuhanek@comdt.uscg.mil.

Towing Vessel Fire-Suppression, Voyage Planning & MTSA Vessel Security Plan (VSP) Compliance Update:

REF: *Federal Register, Vol. 69, No. 117, Friday, June 18, 2004 (Final Rule)*

OVERVIEW: The Final Rule affects portions of 33 CFR Part 164 and 46 CFR Parts 25 & 27. Generally, the portions affecting 33 CFR Part 164 deal with good seamanship and navigation, voyage planning and monitoring. Title 46 CFR Parts 25 and 27 deal with fire prevention and fighting. More specifically, Part 25 focuses on fire extinguishing (portable, semi-portable, and fixed) systems, while Part 27 addresses fire protection and suppression equipment, internal communications, fuel systems, and crew training.

DEADLINES: The majority of these provisions came into force on July 19, 2004. However, installation of certain systems required by the Final Rule were deferred in order to allow industry sufficient time to acquire and install the systems. As of April 29, 2005, towing vessels must have the fire pumps, mains, and hoses required by 46 CFR §27.301.

ENFORCEMENT: Coast Guard Activities New York will begin performing compliance verification examinations on towing vessels following the April 29, 2005 deadline. These verification exams will be performed both as underway boardings from Coast

Guard vessels, as well as from dockside examinations. In order to avoid delays associated with underway boardings, it is recommended that tow/tug vessel operators schedule a dockside exam through the Cargo Vessel Section. Scheduling of dockside exams may begin in advance of the April 29 deadline. A roster of verified compliant vessels will be provided to the underway teams in order to avoid redundant boardings and interruption of commercial operations.

Please note that MTSA Vessel Security Plan (VSP) verification examinations will be conducted concurrently on those vessels also required to carry a VSP, or that carry the Alternative Security Plan (ASP).

Points of Contact: LTJG Hoon Park at (718) 354-4280 / Hpark@actny.uscg.mil or LTJG Eric Chang at (718) 354-4272 / EChang@actny.uscg.mil.

Prevention Department Directory

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